

How Do I Get Involved?

If you are like a majority of new skiers, you have had your first introduction to water skiing by participating in a “Learn to Ski” clinic. The experience was great and you learned the fundamentals of skiing. “What about a boat and ski, and who will drive? Where can I find other skiers in my area? Are there any schools that work with someone with a disability?”

Water Skiers with Disabilities Association (WSDA) can assist you in overcoming these obstacles. One of the best ways a new skier can learn is to ski with experienced skiers. WSDA can help you locate other skiers in your area; or, if another WSDA member is not in your immediate area, you can find out who your WSDA Regional Representative is and he or she can put you in contact with other “Learn to Ski” clinics and ski schools.

If you are ready to purchase your own ski, WSDA can assist you in locating a company that has the right ski for you. Some “Learn to Ski” programs have a loaner system where you might borrow or rent a ski. There may be someone near you that would let you use his or her equipment or possibly have an extra ski for you to try. If you have a unique equipment need, WSDA’s Equipment Development Committee may be able to help as well.

For more information,
contact WSDA at
1-800-533-2972



1251 Holy Cow Road
Polk City, Florida 33868-8200
(863) 324-4341 ★ Fax: (863) 325-8259
Web Site: USAWATERSKI.org

WSDA



Water Skiers
with
Disabilities
Association

Water Skiers with Disabilities Association (WSDA) was created in 1994 as an official sport division of the American Water Ski Association (now USA Water Ski). The United States Olympic Committee and the International Water Ski Federation recognize USA Water Ski as the National Governing Body for the sport of water skiing in the United States.

The purpose of WSDA is to organize, promote and direct water skiing for individuals with disabilities from “Learn to Ski” clinics to international competition. Members of WSDA and their local water ski clubs hold clinics throughout the nation. WSDA sanctions the Water Skiers with Disabilities Water Ski National Championships every August. Typically held in conjunction with the Nationals, every other year, on even numbered years, WSDA coordinates the U.S. Disabled Water Ski Team Trials. WSDA selects the 14-member U.S. Disabled Water Ski Team on the basis of performances at Nationals to represent the United States at the biannual World Championships the following year.

Through WSDA’s Equipment Development Committee and in cooperation with adaptive equipment manufacturers, technology for the sport of water skiing is constantly being developed. WSDA’s Sports Development Committee refines and disseminates teaching and training techniques to clinicians and coaches throughout the world. For individuals wanting to increase their involvement in water skiing, a network of accessible ski sites and clubs is maintained and made available to WSDA members.

How Do Individuals with Disabilities Ski?

There is a variety of adaptive ski equipment available that allows individuals with physical disabilities to enjoy the sport of water skiing. Individuals with a disability of a single leg (amputees, post polio, muscular diseases, etc.) typically ski



standing up on one ski. There are some single leg amputees that use a prosthetic “ski leg” and ski on two skis or a single ski using both legs. For individuals that have an

impairment to one arm there is a variety of slings and harnesses that help compensate for the lack of pulling on one side of the body.

Individuals that are unable to stand (spinal cord injuries, some types of cerebral palsy and muscular diseases) will ski using a “sit ski.” These come in an assortment of sizes from wide, very stable skis which incorporate a “starting block” (to assist the skier with weak or poor grip strength), to very narrow competitive skis designed for running the slalom course.

Skiers with vision impairments ski with minimal adaptations. Using whistle signals, the skier with a vision impairment can be advised when the water is clear of obstacles and freely ski without any assistance.

All of the above mentioned disabilities compete in three event, or tournament skiing. Individuals with



Slalom

similar disabilities ski against one another. Athletes compete in slalom (getting around as many buoys as possible in successive passes without falling or missing a buoy), tricks



Tricks

(utilizing a flat bottom ski to perform acrobatics on the surface of the water



Jumping

and in the air), and jumping (going as far as possible over a ramp, landing successfully and skiing away).